

# Transforming public sector processes

## Ways to simplify operations and improve service



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In recent years, many public organisations have responded positively to budget cuts by making their processes more efficient. In particular, there's been a huge effort to recover costs by streamlining admin and reducing paper trails.

But these improvements have not been driven by budget alone. Processes are also being re-designed to satisfy

citizens who have increasingly high expectations of the customer service they receive. It's the often quoted "John Lewis effect". Top retailers are raising the bar, and we all expect higher standards of service these days.

So while there have been many improvements in public sector processes, few of us would argue the job is done. We already know that

government austerity measures will stay in place until at least 2018. And it's likely that our expectations as citizens – empowered and connected as we are – are only going to continue rising. In this How-To guide, we suggest areas you can focus on to continue the drive towards a more streamlined and effective future.

### Key process challenges

Get **staff input** and **buy-in** early on

**Eliminate** out-dated **manual processes**

**Reduce waste** by focusing on **processes** that **impact citizens**

Make the most of **new** and **existing technology**

"Our budgets are being reduced but we can't reduce the performance of services...we need to strip out any waste or non-value added work and speed things up for the customer."

Dr Carlton Brand, Corporate Director,  
Wiltshire Council



Streamlining processes is as much about business change as it is about people and technology. We recommend a number of areas that you can focus on to make efficiency ingrained in your culture.

1	Start with staff	Many organisations now include staff in their planning and service re-design. People on the ground are often in the best position to identify processes that have become outdated. By getting your people involved from the outset, you're also more likely to <b>create 'champions' that will drive the successful implementation of new processes in the field.</b>
2	Realign your performance metrics	Groundbreaking new processes will only achieve success if they have buy-in from the people who implement them. So make sure you communicate the benefits as early as possible. Try to <b>change the way you measure individual performance</b> – shifting away from form filling and focusing on citizen outcomes.
3	Think lean	Many processes have been overhauled in recent years, but there are few that can't be further refined through the use of lean thinking. One health service provider recently reported that they reduced their letter writing process from 48 steps down to 11. A council has reduced a two-week maintenance process down to two hours. <b>The end result is a much slicker and responsive service for citizens.</b>
4	Make the most of your existing technology	Mobile technology is playing a major role in the automation of processes. Connecting mobile devices to the back office, means community based staff don't have to travel back to their base. But you don't necessarily need to invest in new hardware. You can design data collection applications for your existing smartphones that <b>eliminate the need for inefficient manual data inputting.</b>
5	Try prototyping	Most people are familiar with prototyping as a method for developing new products. Could it have a role to play in public sector transformation? Prototyping already helps a number of public sector leaders <b>design radically different processes and services.</b> More importantly, it helps them to test the appeal of those services with citizens.
6	Capitalise on PSN	The true value of Public Services Network (PSN) lies in its ability to drive transformation of frontline service delivery. <b>Breaking down silos and creating opportunities to improve processes through cross-sector collaboration.</b> See how PSN can enable the secure exchange of information between your teams and other organisations.



## Want to find out more?

Watch our **Public Perspectives video series** featured on our **Guardian Partner Zone** where public sector leaders talk about their biggest challenges and **our experts** give insight into shaping future services.

To see our videos and for more information search for: **Vodafone Partner Zone**



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